

Emergency Support Function #4 Firefighting

Primary District Agency: Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department

Support District Agencies: DC Water and Sewer Authority
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
Department of Health
Department of Human Services
Department of Mental Health
Department of Public Works
District Department of Transportation
Emergency Management Agency
Metropolitan Police Department
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Non-Governmental Organizations:

Potomac Electric Power Company
Washington Gas Company

Primary Federal Agency: Department of Agriculture/Forest Service

I. Introduction

A. Purpose

ESF #4—Firefighting supports DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS) with the response and suppression of urban fires resulting from, or occurring coincidentally with, a public emergency in an extraordinary situation.

B. Scope

ESF #4 manages and coordinates firefighting activities including search, rescue, containment, suppression, coordination of evacuation in the hazard areas, and delivery of emergency medical services.

II. Policies

- A. Priority will be given to saving lives and protecting property, in that order.
- B. The Incident Command System (ICS) will be implemented to effectively manage and control resources at the scene of emergencies.
- C. The FEMS Personnel Accountability System will be used to track and control the movement of FEMS personnel.
- D. FEMS will operate at incidents using standard operating guidelines (SOGs). SOGs are predetermined, standardized practices that enable the firefighting units to operate in a coordinated and safe manner.

III. Situation

A. Disaster Condition

- 1. The management of a large firefighting operation is complex, often involving dozens of firefighting resources. Fire resulting from, or independent of, but occurring coincidentally with, a public emergency may place extraordinary demands on available resources and logistics support systems.
- 2. A public emergency may result in numerous urban fires. The damage potential from fires in urban areas during and after a public emergency exceeds that of all other causes. Fires may have the potential to spread rapidly, cause extensive damage, and pose a serious threat to life and property. Available firefighting resources may be difficult to obtain and utilize because of massive disruption of communication, transportation, utility, and water systems.

B. Planning Assumptions

- 1. Urban fires may result from a natural disaster. They also may occur as the result of another significant event. Large, damaging fires may be common.
- 2. At the time of a public emergency, there may be fires burning in multiple locations in the District. These fires will draw upon the same resources (engines or other tactical and support resources) that would be needed to support firefighting and other emergency operations. It must be assumed that some firefighting resources will become scarce, resulting in the public emergency-related firefighting operations competing for resources.
- 3. Telephone communications may be interrupted.

4. FEMS 800 MHz radio communication may be interrupted in certain situations.
5. Bridge failures, traffic, landslides, damaged road systems, air traffic restrictions, and so forth, may hamper access, making conventional travel to the fire location extremely difficult or impossible.
6. Efficient and effective mutual aid among the various local, state, and federal fire-suppression agencies requires the use of ICS in accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), together with compatible firefighting equipment and communications.

IV. Concept of Operations

A. General

1. ESF #4 will manage and coordinate firefighting and fire suppression activities, by mobilizing fire and rescue resources in support of urban firefighting operations. ESF #4 will use established firefighting and support organizations, processes, and procedures. Responsibility for situation assessment and determination of resource needs lies primarily with Incident Commanders.
2. Requests for firefighting assistance and resources will be coordinated through the Office of Unified Communications to the appropriate fire and rescue units.

B. Organization

FEMS is an integrated system of firefighting, rescue, and emergency medical units strategically located throughout the city. These units are continually staffed with highly trained firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and paramedics. An ICS will be implemented to effectively manage and control resources at the scene of emergencies.

C. Notification

1. In most cases, fires are reported directly to the Office of Unified Communications via telephone (911).
2. Upon notification by Emergency Management Agency (EMA) of a potential or actual public emergency requiring response, beyond normal response operations, the fire chief or designee will cause all senior command staff officials to be notified by telephone or pager through the Office of Unified Communications.

3. Mutual aid support will generally be requested through the Office of Unified Communications and coordinated through EMA when necessary.

D. Response Actions

1. Initial Actions

- a. The ESF #4 Coordinator—a FEMS officer with the rank of fire captain or higher who will have a working knowledge of the SOGs, resources, and capabilities of FEMS—will do the following:
 - (1) Locate at the EOC within two hours of notification.
 - (2) Establish communication links with primary and/or support agencies.
 - (3) Establish communication links with the Incident Commanders.
 - (4) Establish communications links with the FEMS senior command staff.
 - (5) Obtain an initial fire situation and damage assessment through established intelligence procedures.
 - (6) Contribute to situation reports.
- b. FEMS operations will do the following:
 - (1) Provide command and control of incidents.
 - Institute an incident management system, including unified command as necessary.
 - (2) Provide trained firefighters to the scene.
 - Maintain an adequate on-duty force as first responders.
 - Activate the Department's Mobilization Plan as necessary to call back off-duty personnel.
 - (3) Provide sufficient firefighting apparatus to the scene, as required by immediate firefighting needs.
 - Maintain sufficient front-line fire apparatus for immediate response.
 - (4) Perform search and rescue as necessary.
 - Provide trained search and rescue personnel to the scene.

- (5) Perform technical rescue as necessary.
Provide trained technical rescue personnel with appropriate equipment to the scene.
- (6) Provide emergency medical technicians and paramedics to the scene with appropriate equipment. Perform triage and emergency medical treatment as necessary.
- (7) Provide EMS transport units to the scene, as required.
 - Perform emergency medical transportation as necessary.
 - Maintain sufficient in-service ambulances.
- (8) Determine if evacuations are needed.
 - Direct and coordinate as needed.

2. Continuing Actions

- a. Obtain, maintain, and provide fire situation and damage assessment information through established intelligence procedures.
- b. Determine and resolve, as necessary, issues regarding resource shortages, slow processing, and interagency conflicts.
- c. Maintain close coordination with the support agencies.
- d. Maintain a complete log of actions taken, resource orders, records, and reports.
- e. Document resource expenditures.
- f. Request additional resources as necessary from support agencies, mutual aid providers, the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, and Federal resources.
- g. Procure and maintain sufficient reserve fire apparatus to enable additional units to be placed in service as required.
- h. Activate mutual aid agreements to ensure additional immediate response if necessary from surrounding jurisdictions.
- i. Procure and maintain an adequate stock of medical supplies.
- j. Activate agreements for emergency resupply as needed.
- k. Procure and maintain sufficient reserve ambulances to enable additional units to be placed in service as required.

- l. Activate mutual aid agreements to enable requests for immediate mutual aid ambulance units.
- m. Perform fire/arson investigation.
- n. Maintain an on-duty investigation team for duration of investigation.

V. Responsibilities

A. Primary District Agency

Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS)—FEMS responds to calls from residents, visitors, and organizations in the District. FEMS will provide a liaison to the EMA EOC to provide FEMS's operations status. The department accomplishes this responsibility through five areas of operations:

1. Fire Prevention—preventing fires before they occur.
2. Fire Suppression—extinguishing fires that do occur.
3. Special Operations—technical rescue.
4. Emergency Medical Services—providing state-of-the-art pre-hospital emergency medical treatment and transport services.
5. Support Services—including administration, finance, communication, fleet maintenance, research and development, risk management, professional standards, management information and technology services, and departmental training.

B. Support District Agencies

Support agencies will assist at the scene of a fire in accordance with their mission and responsibilities assigned under the DRP.

1. **DC Water and Sewer Authority (DCWASA)**—DCWASA will ensure that adequate water supply is maintained to support firefighting efforts, and increase area pressure if required.
2. **Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)**—DCRA will provide engineers to assess structural damage and provide building plans as available for affected structures.
3. **Department of Health (DOH)**—DOH will coordinate health and medical assistance in the District as needed in firefighting efforts. This will be

done through clinical assessment and management of health care facilities, mental health assistance for those affected, assessment of health and medical needs, and notification to local hospitals for mass medical care activities. DOH will provide support to Casualty Collection Points (CCP) established by FEMS.

4. **Department of Human Services (DHS)**—DHS will assist in providing for evacuees including food, bedding, supplies, and transportation using contractual services of the National Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross.
5. **Department of Mental Health (DMH)**—DMH will coordinate mental health activities within the District through needs assessment and provision of critical incident stress management (CISM) for first responders and crisis counseling for victims/families and special vulnerable populations.
6. **Department of Public Works (DPW)**—DPW will provide on-site sand and salt for slippery conditions, and refueling as necessary.
7. **District Department of Transportation (DDOT)**—DDOT will assist with traffic control and provide traffic operations support to the emergency location.
8. **Emergency Management Agency (EMA)**—EMA will activate the EOC and require ESFs to staff the Consequence Management Team (CMT) and perform an assessment of the situation through Situation Reports (SITREPS), determining the immediate critical needs and the need for federal assistance. The mobile command van will be dispatched to the scene to gather information on the type of hazardous material involved and other data.
9. **Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)**—MPD will provide site perimeter security, traffic control, staging area security, and assistance with emergency evacuations during and after a fire to protect the health and safety of persons and the integrity of the fire scene. MPD will also perform criminal investigations as necessary.
10. **Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME)**—OCME will respond to the scene and provide coordination of mass fatality efforts, including investigating, establishing temporary morgue(s), coordinating transportation of remains, performing postmortem examinations and identifications, securing evidence, certifying cause and manner of death, and releasing remains, through ESF #8—Health and Medical Services, Fatality Management.

11. **Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)**—WMATA will respond with FEMS to any incident involving Metro property; provide backup resources when District agency resources, personnel, and equipment must be supplemented in response to an incident that impacts Metro property; and provide Metro buses, as needed, for evacuating the population.
11. **Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO)**—PEPCO will provide an Emergency Response Team (ERT) to address electric power utility disconnects as necessary.
12. **Washington Gas Company (WGC)**—WGC will provide an ERT to address natural gas utility disconnects as necessary.

C. Primary Federal Agency

Department of Agriculture/Forest Service (USDA)—USDA is the coordinating federal agency for ESF #4 and will provide direct, technical, and other support to the District through ESF #4.

Upon the Presidential Declaration of an emergency or major disaster under the authority of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief Act as Amended, April 1999, the Department of Homeland Security will implement the National Response Plan (NRP). Initially, these agencies will operate out of the FEMA Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC). Later, when the Joint Field Office (JFO) is established near the disaster area, the agency ESF representatives that comprise the ERT will be in the JFO.